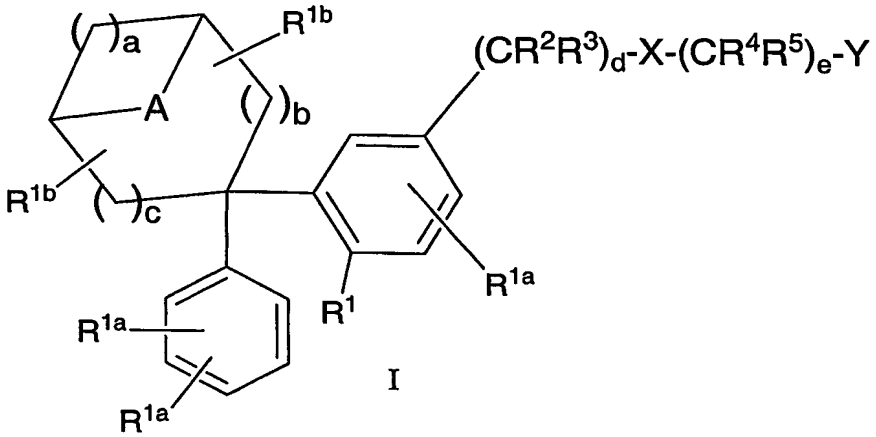
WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A compound represented by formula I:



I

and the pharmaceutically acceptable salts, esters and solvates thereof wherein:

"a" is an integer selected from 1, 2 and 3; and b and c are each integers independently selected from 0, 1 and 2;

"A" represents a methylene or ethylene group;

each R^{1a} is independently selected from the group consisting of: -H, -F, -Cl, -Br, -C_{1-6}alkyl, -CN, -OH, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkoxy, -$N(R^a)_2$, -C_{1-6} alkyl$N(R^a)_2$, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl and -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

each R^{1b} is independently selected from the group consisting of: -H, -F, -C_{1-6} alkyl, -OH, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy, -$N(R^a)_2$and -C_{1-6}alkyl$N(R^a)$,

or one R^{1b} group can represent oxo and the other is as previously defined;

R^1 represents -H or is selected from the group consisting of:

a) halo, -OH, -CO_2R^a, -$C(O)NR^aR^b$, -C(O)-Hetcy1, -$N(R^a)_2$, -$S(O)_2NR^aR^b$, -NO_2, -$SO_2NR^bC(O)R^a$, -$NR^bSO_2R^a$, -$NR^bC(O)R^a$, -$C(O)SO_2NR^aR^b$, -$NR^bC(O)NR^aR^b$, -$NR^bCO_2R^a$, -$OC(O)NR^aR^b$, -$C(O)NR^bNR^aR^b$, -CN, -$S(O)_pR^a$ and -OSO_2R^a,

b) -C_{1-10}alkyl, -C_{2-10}alkenyl, -C_{2-10}alkynyl, -OC_{1-10}alkyl, -OC_{3-10}alkenyl and -OC_{3-10}alkynyl, said groups being optionally substituted with: -OH, -CO_2R^a, -$C(O)NR^aR^b$, -$C(O)N(R^a)C_{1-6}$alkenyl, -$C(O)N(R^a)C_{1-6}$alkynyl, -C(O)-Hetcy1, -$N(R^a)_2$, -$S(O)_2NR^aR^b$, -$SO_2NR^bC(O)R^a$, -$NR^bSO_2R^a$, -$NR^bC(O)R^a$, -$C(O)SO_2NR^aR^b$, -$NR^bC(O)NR^aR^b$, -$NR^bCO_2R^a$, -$OC(O)NR^aR^b$, -$C(O)NR^bNR^aR^b$, -$S(O)_pR^a$, Aryl, HAR, -Hetcy1, and up to 5 fluoro groups, wherein Hetcy1 is selected from azetidinyl, pyrrolidinyl, piperidinyl, piperazinyl, morpholinyl and γ-lactam;

c) Aryl or HAR optionally substituted with 1-2 members selected from the group consisting of: -F, -Cl, -Br, -C_{1-6} alkyl, -CN, -OH, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -C_{1-6}alkylNH_2, -C_{1-6}alkyl-NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -C_{1-6}alkyl$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -C_{1-6}alkyl-CN, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl and -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

"d" and "e" are each integers independently selected from 0, 1, 2 and 3, such that the sum of d plus e is 1-6;

each p independently represents an integer selected from 0, 1 and 2;

X represents a bond, or is selected from the group consisting of –O-, -$S(O)_p$- and -NR^a-;

R^2, R^3, R^4 and R^5 are each independently selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_{1-6} alkyl, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -OH, -fluoro, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy, -$N(R^a)_2$, and

0-1 of CR^2R^3 and 0-1 of CR^4R^5 can represent a group selected from carbonyl, thiocarbonyl, $C=NR^a$ and a 3-7 membered cycloalkyl ring,

provided that when X represents -$S(O)_p$-, and p is 1 or 2, the CR^2R^3 and CR^4R^5 groups adjacent to X represent moieties other than carbonyl, thiocarbonyl and $C=NR^a$ and

further provided that when X is –O- or –NR^a-, at least one of CR^2R^3 and CR^4R^5 adjacent to X represents a moiety other than carbonyl, thiocarbonyl and $C=NR^a$;

Y is selected from the group consisting of Aryl, HAR and Hetcy, wherein each is optionally mono-substituted or di-substituted with R^{1a};

each R^a is independently selected from the group consisting of –H and :

(b) -C_{1-10}alkyl, -C_{3-10}alkenyl, or –C_{3-10}alkynyl, optionally substituted with 1-3 fluoro groups or 1-2 members selected from the group consisting of: -OH, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -CN, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, and -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

(b) Aryl or Ar-C_{1-6}alkyl-, the aryl portions being optionally substituted with 1-2 of -C_{1-6} alkyl, -CN, -OH, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkoxy, -C_{1-6}alkylNH_2, -C_{1-6}alkylNHC_{1-4}alkyl, -C_{1-6}alkyl$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -CO_2H and -CO_2C_{1-6}alkyl groups, and 1-3 -F, -Cl or -Br groups;

and the alkyl portion of Ar-C_{1-6}alkyl- being optionally substituted with –OH, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, and 1-3 fluoro groups;

(c) Hetcy or Hetcy-C_{1-6}alkyl-, each being optionally substituted on carbon with 1-2 members selected from the group consisting of: -F, -OH, -CO_2H, -C_{1-6}alkyl, -CO_2C_{1-6}alkyl, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, oxo, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl and -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$; and optionally substituted on nitrogen when present with -C_{1-6}alkyl or -C_{1-6}acyl; and

the alkyl portion of Hetcy-C_{1-6}alkyl- being optionally substituted with 1-2 of: -F, -OH, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl and -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

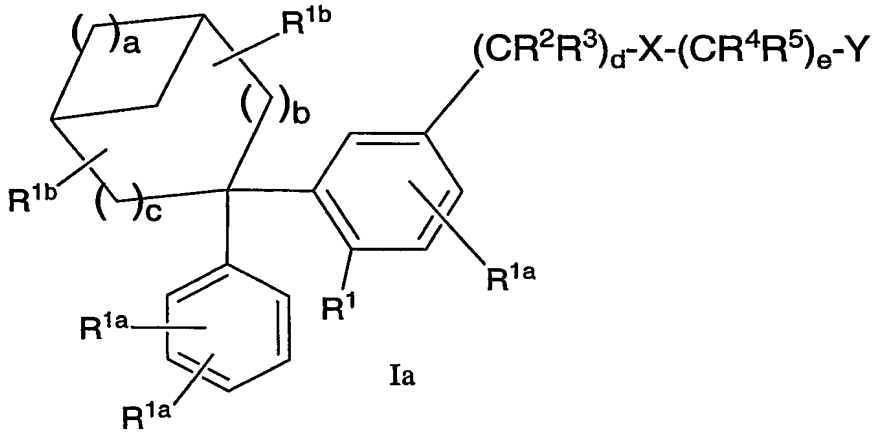
(d) HAR or HAR-C_{1-6}alkyl-, said HAR and HAR portion of HAR-C_{1-6}alkyl- being substituted with 1-2 members selected from the group consisting of: -F, -Cl, -Br, -C_{1-6} alkyl, -CN, -OH, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkoxy NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -CO_2H, -CO_2C_{1-6}alkyl; and

the alkyl portion of HAR-C_{1-6}alkyl- being optionally substituted with 1-2 of: -F, -OH, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl and -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

each R^b is independently selected from the group consisting of: -H, -NH_2, and -C_{1-10}alkyl optionally substituted with members selected from the group consisting of 1-3 fluoro groups and 1-2 of -OH, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl and -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

and when present in the same moiety, (a) R^a and R^b, (b) two R^a groups or (c) two R^b groups can be taken in combination with the atom or atoms to which they are attached and any intervening atoms and represent a 4-7 membered ring containing 0-3 heteroatoms selected from O, $S(O)_p$ and N, and the 4-7 membered ring may be optionally substituted with a member selected from the group consisting of -C_{1-6}alkyl, -C_{2-6}acyl and oxo.

2. The compound of claim 1 having structural formula Ia:

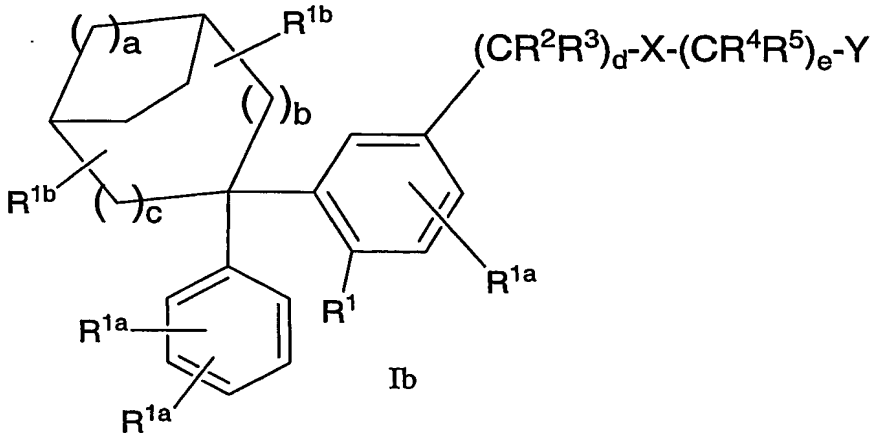


Ia

and the pharmaceutically acceptable salts, esters and solvates thereof, wherein "a" is an integer selected from 1, 2 and 3; and b and c are each integers independently selected from 0, 1 and 2; provided that the sum of "a" + b + c is from 1 to 5.

3. The compound of claim 2 wherein "a" is an integer selected from 1 and 2; and one of b and c is 0 (zero) and the other is 1.

4. The compound of claim 1 having structural formula Ib:



Ib

and the pharmaceutically acceptable salts, esters and solvates thereof wherein: "a" is an integer selected from 2 and 3; and b and c are integers independently selected from 0 and 1; provided that the sum of "a" + b + c is from 2 to 4.

5. The compound of claim 4 wherein "a" is 2, and b and c are integers selected from 0 and 1.

6. The compound of claim 5 wherein "a" is 2, b is 1 and c is 0 or 1.

7. The compound of claim 1 wherein three R^{1a} groups shown in the generic structural drawing of formula I, represent -H and one R^{1a} group is selected from the group consisting of: -F, -Cl, -C_{1-6} alkyl, -CN, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy, -N(R^a)$_2$, -C_{1-6}alkylN(R^a)$_2$, -NHC(O)C_{1-4}alkyl, -C(O)NHC_{1-4}alkyl and -C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)$_2$.

8. The compound of claim 1 wherein one R^{1b} represents -H and the other R^{1b} is selected from the group consisting of: -H, -F, -C_{1-6}alkyl, -OH,-OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy, -N(R^a)$_2$ and -C_{1-6}alkylN(R^a)$_2$ and oxo.

9. The compound of claim 8 wherein both R^{1b} groups represent -H.

10. The compound of claim 1 wherein R^1 represents a member selected from the group consisting of:

a) $-C(O)NR^aR^b$, -C(O)-Hetcy1, $-N(R^a)_2$, $-S(O)_2NR^aR^b$, $-SO_2NR^bC(O)R^a$, $-NR^bSO_2R^a$, $-NR^bC(O)R^a$, -CN, $-S(O)_pR^a$ and $-OSO_2R^a$;

b) $-C_{1-10}$alkyl, $-C_{3-6}$alkenyl, $-C_{3-6}$alkynyl, $-OC_{1-10}$alkyl, $-OC_{3-6}$alkenyl and $-OC_{3-10}$alkynyl, said groups being optionally substituted with a member selected form the group consisting of: $-CO_2R^a$, $-C(O)NR^aR^b$, $-C(O)N(R^a)C_{1-6}$alkenyl, $-C(O)N(R^a)C_{1-6}$alkynyl, -C(O)-Hetcy1, $-N(R^a)_2$, $-S(O)_2NR^aR^b$, $-SO_2NR^bC(O)R^a$, $-NR^bSO_2R^a$, $NR^bC(O)R^a$, $-S(O)_pR^a$, Aryl, HAR, -Hetcy1, and up to 5 fluoro groups; and

c) HAR optionally substituted with 1-2 members selected from the group consisting of: -F, -Cl, -Br, $-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, -CN, -OH, $-OC_{1-6}$ alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy, $-NH_2$, $-NHC_{1-4}$alkyl, $-N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, $-C_{1-6}alkylNH_2$, $-C_{1-6}$alkyl-NHC_{1-4}alkyl, $-C_{1-6}alkylN(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, $-C_{1-6}$alkyl-CN, $-NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, $-C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl and $-C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$.

11. The compound of claim 1 wherein d and e are integers independently selected from 0, 1, 2 and 3, provided that the sum of d plus e is 1-3.

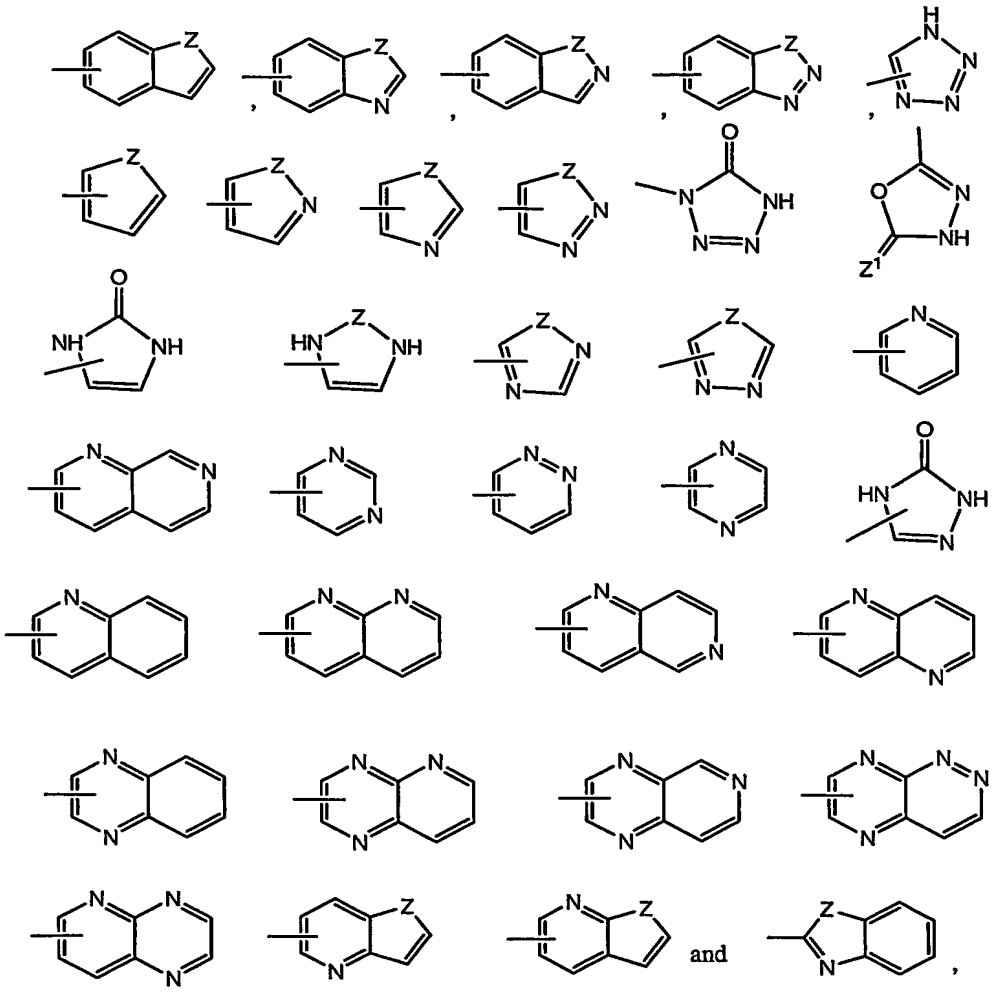
12. The compound of claim 1 wherein X represents a bond, -O- or $-S(O)_p$-.

13. The compound of claim 1 wherein R^2, R^3, R^4 and R^5 are independently selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, $-OC_{1-6}$alkyl, -OH, -fluoro, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy and $-N(R^a)_2$.

14. The compound of claim 1 wherein $-(CR^2R^3)_d-X-C(R^4R^5)_e-$ represents a member selected from the group consisting of -O-CH_2- and $-CH_2CH_2$--.

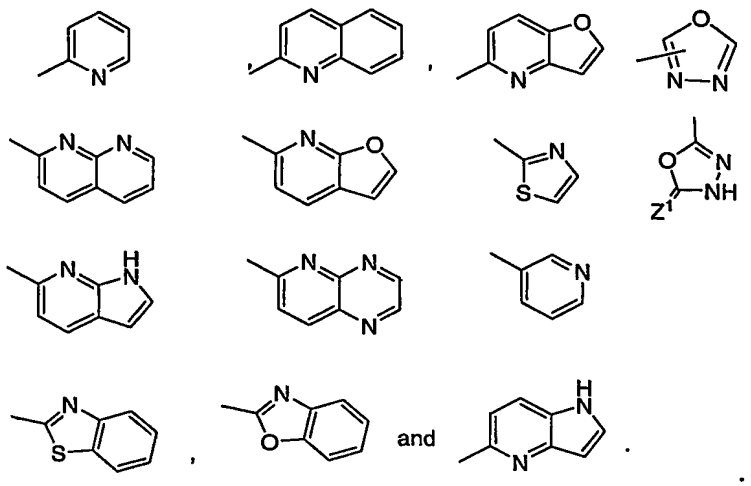
15. The compound of claim 1 wherein Y represents HAR.

16. The compound of claim 15 wherein Y represents HAR selected from the group consisting of:



wherein Z represents O, S or NH; and Z^1 represents O or S.

17. The compound of claim 15 wherein Y is HAR selected from the group consisting of:



18. The compound of claim 1 wherein each R^a is independently selected from the group consisting of -H and:

(a) -C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, C_{3-6}alkenyl, C_{3-6}alkynyl, each optionally substituted with 1-3 fluoro groups or a member selected from the group consisting of: -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -CN, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl and -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

(b) Aryl or Ar-C_{1-6}alkyl-, the aryl portions being optionally substituted with a member selected from -F, -Cl, -C_{1-4} alkyl, -CN, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-4} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-4}alkoxy, -C_{1-4}alkylNH_2, -C_{1-4}alkylNHC_{1-4} alkyl, -C_{1-4} alkyl$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -CO_2H, and -CO_2C_{1-6}alkyl;

and the alkyl portion of Ar-C_{1-6}alkyl- being optionally substituted with -F, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

(c) Hetcy or Hetcy-C_{1-6}alkyl-, each being optionally substituted on carbon with 1-2 members selected from the group consisting of: -F, -CO_2H, -C_{1-6}alkyl, -CO_2C_{1-6}alkyl, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, oxo, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl and -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$; and on nitrogen, when present, with -C_{1-6}alkyl or -C_{1-6}acyl; and

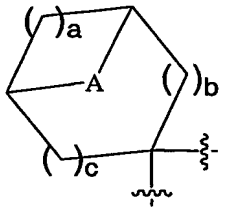
the alkyl portion of Hetcy-C_{1-6}alkyl- being optionally substituted with -F, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl and -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$;

(d) HAR or HAR-C_{1-6}alkyl-, said HAR and HAR portion of HAR-C_{1-6}alkyl- optionally substituted with -F, -Cl, -Br, -C_{1-6} alkyl, -CN, -OC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkoxyNH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl, -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -$NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl, -$C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, -CO_2H, -CO_2C_{1-6}alkyl; and

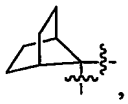
the alkyl portion of HAR-C_{1-6}alkyl- being optionally substituted with -F, -OC_{1-6}alkyl, -NH_2, -NHC_{1-4}alkyl and -$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$.

19. The compound of claim 1 wherein each R^b is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_{1-10}alkyl optionally substituted with 1-3 fluoro groups.

20. The compound of claim 1 wherein:



is selected from the group consisting of: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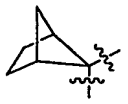
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and

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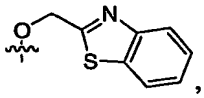
$-(CR^2R^3)_d-X-(CR^4R^5)_e-Y-(R^{1a})_2$ is selected from the group consisting of: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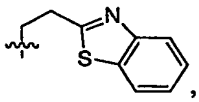
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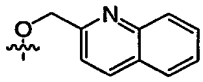
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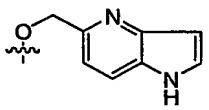
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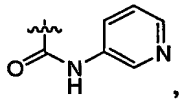
and R^1 is selected from the group consisting of: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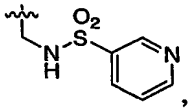
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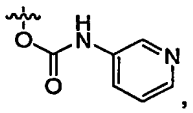
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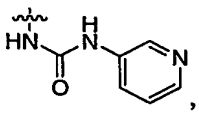
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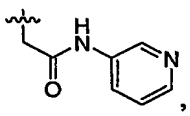
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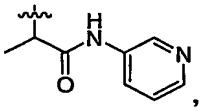
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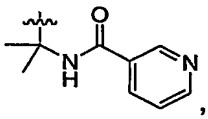
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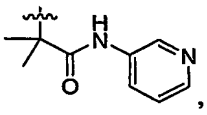
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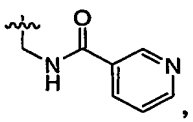
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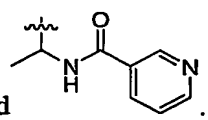
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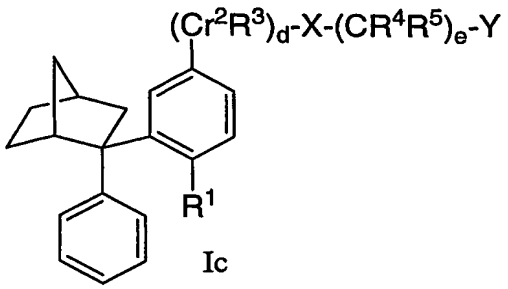
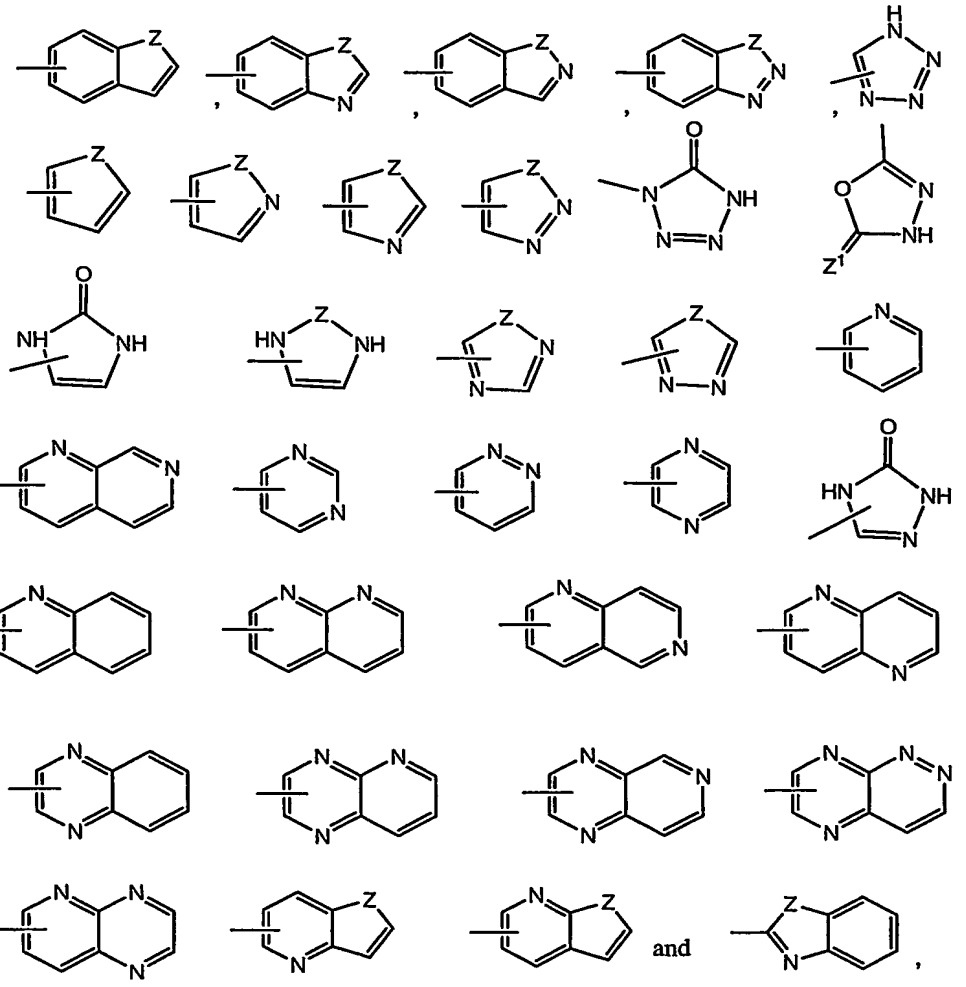
21. The compound of claim 1 having structural formula Ic:



Ic

wherein d is 0 (zero); e is 1; X is –O-; R^4 and R^5 are both –H; Y is selected from the group consisting of



and

wherein Z represents O, S or NH; and Z^1 represents O or S;

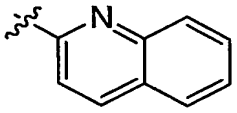
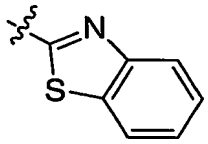
R^1 is selected from the group consisting of:

a) $-OC(O)NR^aR^b$, and $-C(O)NR^aR^b$;

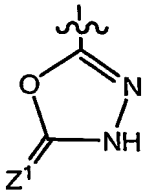
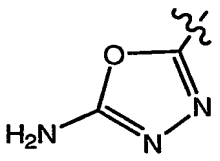
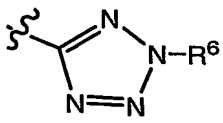
b) C_{1-3}alkyl substituted with a member selected from: $-C(O)-NR^aR^b$and $-C(O)-Hetcy^1$;

and c) HAR optionally substituted with 1-2 members selected from the group consisting of: -F, -Cl, $-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, -CN, -OH, $-OC_{1-6}$ alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6} alkyl, -fluoroC_{1-6}alkoxy, $-NH_2$, $-NHC_{1-4}$alkyl, $-N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, $-C_{1-6}$alkylNH_2, $-C_{1-6}$alkyl-NHC_{1-4}alkyl, $-C_{1-6}$alkyl$N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, $-C_{1-6}$alkyl-CN, $-NHC(O)C_{1-4}$alkyl, $-C(O)NHC_{1-4}$alkyl and $-C(O)N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$.

22. The compound of claim 21 wherein: Y is selected from the group consisting of


and

;

when R^1 is HAR, HAR is selected from: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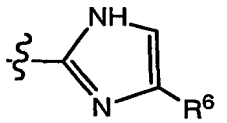
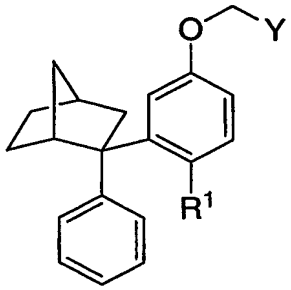
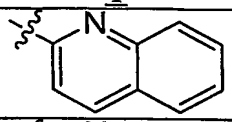
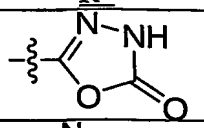
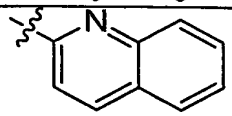
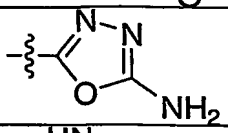
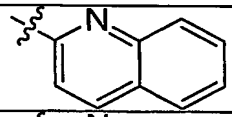
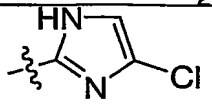
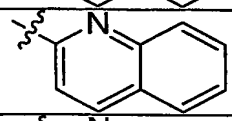
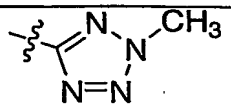
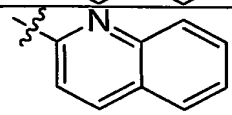
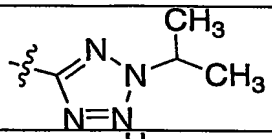
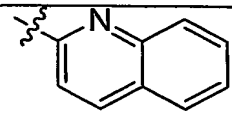
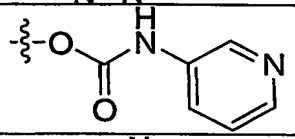
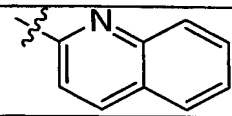
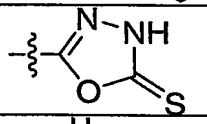
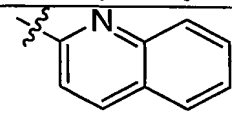
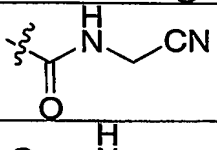
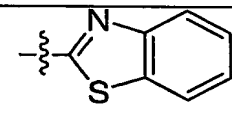
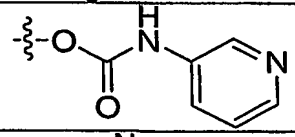
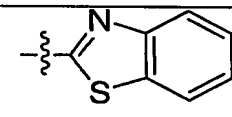
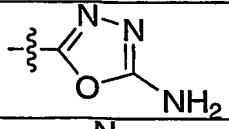
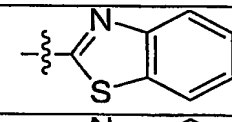
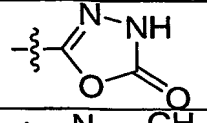
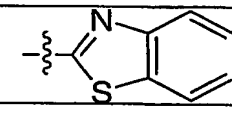
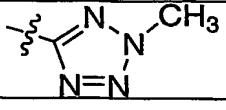

,

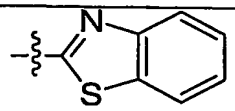
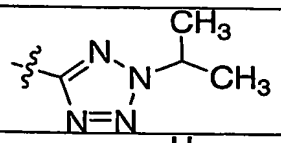
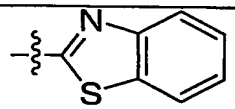
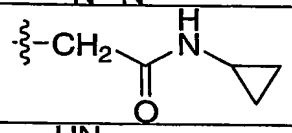
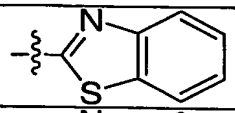
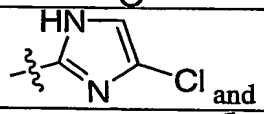
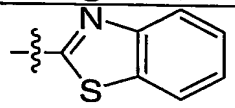
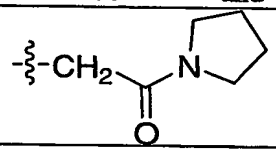
wherein R^6 is selected from –H, $-C_{1-3}$alkyl, $-C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, -F and –Cl;

R^a is selected from (a) $-C_{1-4}$-alkyl and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, each optionally substituted with 1-3 fluoro groups or a member selected from the group consisting of: $-OC_{1-6}$alkyl, -CN, $-NH_2$, $-NHC_{1-4}$alkyl and $-N(C_{1-4}alkyl)_2$, (b) $Hetcy^1$ and (c) pyridinyl; and R^b is –H.

23. The compound of claim 1 selected from the group consisting of:



	Y	R^1
a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		
e)		
f)		
g)		
h)		
i)		
j)		
k)		
l)		

m)		
n)		
o)		 and
p)		

and the pharmaceutically acceptable salts and solvates thereof.

24. A pharmaceutical composition comprised of a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

25. A method for preventing the synthesis, the action, or the release of leukotrienes in a patient which comprises administering to the patient an effective amount of a compound of claim 1.

26. A method for treating a leukotriene-mediated medical condition comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to a patient in need of such treatment.

27. A method for treating an inflammatory condition comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to a patient in need of such treatment.

28. A method for treating atherosclerosis comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to a patient in need of such treatment.

29. The method of claim 28 for halting or slowing atherosclerotic plaque progression.

30. The method of claim 28 for effecting regression of atherosclerotic plaque.

31. The method of claim 28 for preventing or reducing the risk of atherosclerotic plaque rupture in a patient having atherosclerotic plaque.

32. A method of preventing or reducing the risk for a leukotriene-mediated medical condition comprising administering a prophylactically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to a patient in need of such treatment.

33. A method for preventing or reducing the risk of developing atherosclerosis comprising administering a prophylactically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to a patient at risk for developing atherosclerosis.

34. A method for preventing or reducing the risk of an atherosclerotic disease event comprising administering a prophylactically effective amount of a compound of claim 1 to a patient at risk for having an atherosclerotic disease event.

35. The method of treating atherosclerosis of claim 28 further comprising administering to the patient a compound selected from the group consisting of an HMG-CoA reductase inhibitor, cholesterol absorption inhibitor, CETP inhibitor, PPARγ agonist, PPARα agonist, PPAR dual α/γ agonist, and combinations thereof.